July Crisis 1914 - Steps toward war

28 June
Austrian Archduke Franz-Ferdinand is assassinated in Sarajevo

29 June
Austrian military commanders want to invade but need 16 days to mobilize the Army

4 July
Franz-Ferdinand is buried in Vienna

6 July
Kaiser William II given Austria the so-called "Blank Cheque" and then departs for a 20 day sea cruise of the North Sea

7 July
Austria decides they will take military action against Serbia

9 July
Austria decides to use an ultimatum to provoke war. The terms of the ultimatum will be written to that Serbia cannot accept the terms.

13 July
Austrian investigation into the assassination concludes that the Serbian government was not involved in the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. The Austrian Foreign Minister does not tell the Austrian Emperor about this.

15 July
French Prime Minister leaves for Russia to meet with ally.

16 July
Hints about Austrian action against Serbia begin to leak to European diplomats

19 July
Austrian ultimatum to Serbia is drafted

21 July
Austrian Emperor Franz-Josef approves ultimatum. Russian foreign Minister warns German ambassador that Russia will not allow Austria to take military action against Serbia.

22 July
German diplomat notes that the ultimatum is quite harsh.

23 July
Austria delivers ultimatum to Serbia. Serbian response must come within 48 hours.

24 July - Serbia appeals to Russia for help and guidance - Russia urges Serbia to "proceed with extreme caution." Kaiser William II hears about the ultimatum for the first time

25 July - Serbia responds to Austria's ultimatum and is as accommodating as possible. It makes no difference. Serbia mobilizes its army. Austria mobilizes its army 4 hours later. Germany is not informed of Austria's mobilization.

26 July
Russia begins pre-mobilization of its army.

27 July
William II returns from his cruise early. UK puts navy on war alert. UK Prime minister asks cabinet hypothetical question about entering war if France is attacked. France puts army on standby alert.

28 July
Austria declares war on Serbia and begins to attack

29 July - "Willy-Nicky Telegrams" are exchanged by Germany & Russia; Russia mobilizes its army against Austria only. Germany demands Russia demobilize and backdown. UK warns Germany that British neutrality cannot be counted on.

30 July
Russia orders general mobilization of its army.

31 July -
Germany orders army to prepare for war. Germany issues ultimatum to Russia - demobilize in 12 hours or face war. Germany issues ultimatum to France - declare neutrality in 18 hours and hand over army bases on border to show good faith or face war.

1 August
Germany declares war on Russia

2 August
Germany requests free passage through Belgium; Germany and Turkey sign a secret treaty; Italy declares neutrality

3 August
Germany declares war on France; Belgium refuses German Army free passage through their country

4 August
Germany invades Belgium using the Schleiffen Plan

4 August
UK declares war on Germany (Canada and other British Dominions are automatically at war